



GREAT LAKES ATARI DIGEST

Z*NET

Shows, Shows, Shows...and News

Computer generalists and IBM/PC clone users are looking forward to MAXIT, taking place SOON after you read this. MAXIT is a computer exposition taking place here in the Lansing, Michigan area every spring. Much of what you'll see is IBM and business oriented, but the show offers a great opportunity to see how the other half lives and computes. It is sponsored by the Michigan Computer Consortium, a cooperative association of Lansing area User Groups. Enjoy MAXIT on April 9, at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center South Cedar, Lansing.

Two Atari shows are vying for our attention (and dollars) in Detroit this spring and summer. After much ado, the MACE club is expecting great things from the Michigan Atari Computer Exposition. They've announced several big name Atari vendors, as well as a lot of local vendor support. You can catch the MACE show at the Romulus Airport Hilton, May 6 and 7.

And the show everyone in Ataridom is likely to be talking about by now, the World of Atari, will be at the Dearborn Hyatt Regency, June 24 and 25. The kickoff World show, at the Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California, is April 22

and 23. From all indications, it will be the biggest all Atari show EVER!! And most exciting for us here in Michigan, it's coming here next. The Detroit World of Atari show is the second of many around the nation sponsored by ST World. The organizers tell us that, if the Detroit show is as successful as they expect, it will be an annual event. Let's hope it's bigger than our wildest expectations.

Other Fronts

Computer Shopper recently supplied a notice and postcard to its readers informing them of a pending bill in Congress that MAY increase the cost of doing mail order business. The details are a little muddy, but it seems to boil down to a concern by various states that they are losing out on potential tax dollars due to mail orders for merchandise from out of state. I'm not sure from reading the information in Computer Shopper just exactly what the proposal would do. Depending on how you read it, it would either require mail order companies to charge sales tax, and send it to the corresponding state, for EVERY order they fill, or it would be a federal levy, or excise style tax, to help eliminate the advantage mail order gives the consumer. Any way you cut it, this is a fairly anti-consumer proposal. More news next month.

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Editor: Leo Sell
Production: John Nagy
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 **ATARI**

Man from GLAD

(Publisher's Perspective)

by Leo Sell

Publishing GLAD has been every bit the challenge we've expected. Setting standards, getting to know the desktop publishing software and production. OUCH. Next month I'll be on my own, while John vacations in sunny California, and covers the Anaheim World of Atari show. Needless to say, I'll be looking for help from YOU. Articles, articles, articles.

OK, so how do you submit articles? For the most part, our participating clubs have a BBS and uploading an article (and leave a message for your newsletter coordinator) is the easiest way for all of us. The most direct way to submit an article is to upload to the CHAOS BBS at 517-371-1106. Leave me a message when you do.

So what if you don't have a modem? Ask a friend to upload the article for you, or drop off or mail a disk to us.

Just to encourage you to write articles, we'll make the following offer. From the June through the September

issues, if you submit a feature article that is printed, we'll give you the disk of your choice from the CHAOS library for the price of the media.

You may notice that we've begun to feature some reprinted material. As we said last month, we're looking over between 75 and 100 exchange newsletters. We firmly believe that finding and reprinting articles that are timely, of wide interest, or on hard to find subjects, is a service we owe our readers.

We have extra advertising this month. Next month is likely to be a bit lighter on advertising, so it should all even out. We may even have a larger issue next month. So, keep those articles coming.

Looks like I'm going to COMDEX. Should have more than a few things to say about it when I come back. At this point there aren't too many rumors flying on what to expect from Atari. Maybe we'll all be surprised. Wouldn't it be nice to come back with a sample ST Laptop? Even if it's foam rubber, it'd make a great souvenir, Jack.

As we go forward, our look will continue to change, and hopefully improve the look of GLAD. One of the more visible changes we plan is a two color cover starting with the June issue. We'll be looking sharper than ever, just in time for the World of Atari show.

Until next month, keep on keyin'



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About CHAOS...

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are \$15.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to our newsletter, a free disk from our regular libraries, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings are held monthly. The S.T. Interest Group meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, meets on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings (only through the May 1989 meeting) are held in room 118 in the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, on Physics Road on the Michigan State University Campus. Meetings begin at 10:00 am and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them.

To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Road. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about one block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building. A new meeting place will be announced before the June, 1989 meetings.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the CHAOS BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

Position	Name	(all 517) Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	Brian Goluska	332-4415
Sec'y-Treas	Stephen Brooks	353-7720
8-bit Rep	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
16-bit Rep	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
Gen. Pub Lib	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
8-bit Librarian	Levi Trotter	394-3917
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST SIG Coord	Mike Fildey	484-1073
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
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President's Corner

by Leo Sell

Things have been pretty exciting here in Mid-Michigan Atariland. (Not exactly wonderland, but close at times).

We're in the midst of preparations for a plethora of computer shows. MAXIT, a computer exposition for ALL computers, is taking place at the Clarion Hotel here in Lansing on April 9.

The MACE show is at the Airport Hilton on May 6 and 7.

And the World of Atari show that many of of here have been looking forward to since last fall, comes to the Dearborn Hyatt Regency on June 24 and 25.

We need volunteers of time and equipment for all of these shows. At the moment your reading this, MAXIT is VERY CLOSE. Due to a lot of conflict for resources, I really haven't been able to put much together on the show. I need to take care not to spend too much time or voice at MAXIT myself, due to a concert I have Sunday evening. So the need for people, as well as equipment, is critical. If you can help out in any way, call me right away.

The World of Atari show offers a real special opportunity. Various vendors, as well as the club, need equipment for their demos. Loaning your equipment to a vendor should result in a hearty thanks, and maybe

more. The show also needs volunteers to man booths for breaks and such. If you have expertise in a particular piece of equipment or software, and you're willing to man a booth occasionally, let me know.

Last month was election month. I'd like to thank all of the new officers for their willingness to pitch in. This should be a real interesting year for all of us.

Atari is promising a better supply of machines and more advertising. Hopefully things will pick up soon for all of us Atari owners. I hope it's soon. Frankly, the shortages and problems seem to be taking their toll on Atarian's goodwill. It seems like we're seeing more and more carping between user groups and Atari as well as between user groups. Personally, I prefer to stay positive and promote the computer we all love best, rather than take action based on ego or misguided intentions.

I certainly hope Atari adds more dealers soon. I hear tell that they've signed up new dealers numbering in the hundreds. Time will tell I suppose. Meanwhile we'll just keep muddling through.

Hope this finds you warm and well.

Meeting Minutes

The annual meeting and elections took place on March 11, replacing most of the ST SIG meeting. A number of questions, rumors, and announcements took place before the actual business portion of the meeting.

Leo announced that the club is participating in MAXIT on April 9 and that donations of equipment and time are needed. If you can donate either, please contact him. Other announcements included the upcoming MACE show and the World of Atari show. There was some general discussion about product announcements and rumors as well as questions and advice regarding Atari computing problems and solutions. Those in attendance also discussed combining meetings and what format might be used.

The elections followed the discussion, with the following officers elected:

- o President Leo Sell
- o Vice President Brian Goluska
- o Secretary-Treasurer Stephen Brooks
- o ST Representative Chet Kapusinski
- o 8-bit Representative Malcolm Cleveland

The term of office is from April 1, 1989 to March 31, 1990.

To lighten things up a little, Brian Goluska demonstrated his sound digitizer kit, playing Minnie the Moocher at

different speeds and variations.

Finally, Rick Neilsen showed a video tape of his X10/Atari based home control system. The system shown controlled driveway lights as someone drove or walked up the driveway, turned on a welcoming porch light, and announced the visitors with a bell. All in all a very impressive demonstration of a practical use for an Atari computer.

A last reminder was made that a new meeting place will soon be needed. If you have an idea where we can relocate, please call Leo Sell.

ST Library Overview

by Sally Nagy

With all the new disks and re-organizing, it's time to take a look at how the ST Library has finally taken shape. Major divisions are: Utilities, Games, Game Support, Text, Demos, and Education.

Utilities are further organized into the following sections: Communications/Modems, Languages, Language Source Files, General Utilities, Business and Finance, Emulators, and Applications.

One of the most popular modem disks is Utility A1 which has Uniterm and Vanterm. Other modem disks contain BBS programs, Kermit and other goodies to help in the world of telecommunication.

Programmers are offered many different languages and environments to use: Modula 2, Unix, Toy Prolog, Xprolog, ST Basic, Enhanced ST Basic, 'C', Logo, Bradley Forth, 83 Standard Forth, Icon, Xlisp, Assembly and Tiny Basic.

Language Source files and text for GFA Basic, HiSoft Basic, Modula 2, Pascal, 'C', Assembly, and ST Basic can be found in the Language Source section.

You can find RAM disks, Accessories, disk and sector editors, formatters, graphic utilities, labelers, and more in the General Utilities.

In Business and Finance, there are several word processors. STWriter 3.0 is the newest version with German and Spanish support files. There are spell checkers, programs to keep track of your banking, check balancers, and databases.

Emulators found in the library include MS DOS, CPM, Apple, and ST Xformer (8Bit Atari Emulator).

The Applications Section supplies support files for commercial programs, such as PrintMaster, Degas, CAD 3D and Desktop Publishing Packages. There are also various printer drivers, fonts and more.

Under the Games category, one finds Adventure,

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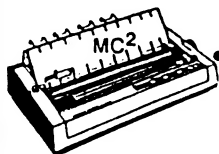
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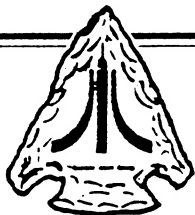
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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

About GAG...

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc.

GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. (Off Atherton between Hammerberg and Van Slyke). Meetings begin at 6:30 pm. All are welcome. GAG is a participating member of the Atari Interface Magazine, and members can purchase subscriptions at a greatly reduced rate. GAG is also affiliated with the Great Lakes Atari Digest, and members receive a free subscription with their membership. Membership is \$15 per year for the family.

GAG has an exceptional public domain library of 8- and 16-bit software. Contact one of the officers to receive a complete catalog. GAG also has a large magazine library for use by its members, including Antic, Analog, ST-Log, Start, and several others.

We do not support piracy. Piracy is theft!

For more information contact:

The Genesee Atari Group PO Box E Flint, MI 48507

Name	Position	(313) Phone#
Jerry Cross	President	736-4544
Dave Pettit	Vice Pres.	232-0508
Ed Kalush	Librarian	(517) 288-4531
Gil Merciez	Librarian	
FACTS BBS		736-3920

President's Report

by Jerry Cross

Well, it didn't take long for the publishers of this magazine to break their promises. They are refusing to publish my in-depth review of the new arcade game "Satanic Nurses", a text adventure game about the adventures of Mr. Peterson and his attempts to escape the evil clutches of Nurse Bambi and Head Nurse Ema Wolfgang. But, because of threats on his life by radical nurses from the local hospital, and a few bomb threats, the publisher won't print my review. What a bunch of

cowards. Maybe I can talk one of the on-line magazines into printing it.

As many of you know by now, there will be a huge Atari show held in Dearborn put on by ST-World. Both GAG and CHAOS are involved with the show, and have promised to do whatever we can to support it. So...

You may also have attended one of the past AtariFest shows held in 1987/88. If so, you recall that there were computers everywhere in the convention hall! There were one or two in each booth, plus a whole bunch that were being used for the MIDI-MAZE game. Where did they come from?

Well, back then a few were brought from the individual companies, but the vast majority were supplied by Atari. Atari had a complete "traveling show" consisting of a truckload of 8- and 16-bit computers, computer desks, canopy, and a lot more. Sadly, they are all gone, sold to the famous "highest bidder". So, those folks attending any of the future AtariFest's or World of Atari shows must now fend for themselves and supply their own computers. In most cases, this involves shipping computers from as far away as California, praying all along that the UPS ya-hoo's don't drop/mash/crunch them.

For vendors coming from Canada, bringing their own computers is far more difficult, even scary! I went through just that sort of thing last year attending the Toronto Atari Convention. Several others didn't check with customs first and had their own horror stories to tell. There are huge bonds to pay, lots of paperwork (in triplicate), nosie custom inspectors asking stupid questions (so what is that thing, eh?). I was expecting someone to walk up with a bottle wanting a urine sample next. Fortunately I was lucky enough to find a sympathetic Toronto club member who agreed to loan me his computer during the show. I never will forget that.

So what is this leading up to? Well, the clubs are being asked to lend some of the vendors their own personal computer equipment to use during the show. Yes, I know how much that computer means to you, and how reluctant you are to part with it. But this is our chance to show the vendors that user groups are willing to help out. If we want these shows to continue it is important to show some support. Although there are no guarantees, I am sure the vendors will show their appreciation to you for letting them use your computers.

If you would like to donate your equipment, here is how to do it. Call Jerry Cross at 736-4544 and let him know what equipment you can let the vendors use. The day before the show arrangements will be made to pick up your equipment and check it to be sure it works properly. The equipment will be delivered DIRECTLY to the vendor by your club officers. After the show it will again be picked up and inspected. If anything should turn up missing or damaged, ST World has guaranteed to repair/replace it. I will personally guarantee that you get your equipment back in it's original condition. The vendor will be told who has donated the equipment in case he wishes to thank you personally.

That's it! So please think about it. As I said I remember what happened during my Toronto trip and I personally plan to give up all of my equipment (a whole truckload!) to the vendors. Any support would be greatly appreciated.

GAG Meeting Minutes

We began the March meeting with a discussion of the progress and status of the two Atari shows coming to Detroit (MACE and ST-World). Jerry asked for volunteers to man both the GAG booth and the main floor. He also asked for members to lend equipment to the various vendors to use in their booth.

There was a short discussion about the new newsletter (GLAD), and everyone seems to be very pleased with both the looks and the contents. The club will continue to send both the AIM newsletter and GLAD until June, after which only GLAD will be sent. If you wish to continue to receive AIM you will need to pay a subscription fee of \$10. Jerry also asked members to consider contributing an article to the newsletter, since our club section was a bit scarce last month.

Due to a mix up with the officers, nobody brought a computer to demo software on. This will be corrected in the future. Since Jerry managed to pick up a cheap 520st to use as a "traveling" computer for the club. Jerry agreed to pick up the cost of the computer, which he will use as a backup for the bbs if necessary. GAG also has purchased a used 130xe from one of the members, and will keep this computer at Discount Computer to copy/demonstrate the 8-bit software.

Next month, we plan to have a MIDI demonstration by Ralph Ferrier. I have been surprised to note that very few of the newsletters put out by Atari clubs have any support for MIDI music, even though Atari is trying to find a niche in the MIDI music industry. I hope we can correct this situation.

After an informal get-together, the meeting broke up around 9:00.

ST Librarian Murmurings

by Gil Merciez

I just wanted to pass on a few short tidbits concerning the GAG ST Library. Available in April will be a catalog disk of the entire ST library. I ran across a nifty little program from the Milatari Group in Wisconsin which catalogs a disk library by both disks and individual files. The program includes a search command which will help in finding programs. This disk will be available for the normal \$3 charge. This disk will be updated monthly, however, and you can receive the latest update by simply returning your original disk at a GAG meeting. There will be no additional charges after the initial \$3 charge. This disk along with the regular printed catalog should help a great deal in searching through the almost 250 disks in the library. Thanks go to Jack Keene, our assistant librarian, for preparing this disk.

In an effort to bring a better value to GAG members you will notice that more and more new disks that appear in the library will be on double sided disks. In the immediate future most of the games disks and utilities disks will remain on a single sided format. The single sided disk drive is no longer being sold with the 520 ST and the 1040 and Mega's have always been sold with double sided disks. Most of the GAG ST owners have double sided drives so that this will present no problem to them. If you are one of the few ST owners who own only a single sided drive, the handwriting is on the wall. Double sided disks are becoming increasingly popular with commercial software vendors. Sierra is now releasing all of their new software on double sided disks. It may be worth considering upgrading your system to a double sided drive. A second drive will cost \$175-200. A single sided drive can be upgraded for \$125-150. Arrangements can be made, however, to purchase many of the double sided disks in a single sided format. See either Jack or myself for details. There will be a \$1 additional charge to cover the cost of the extra disk.

In April look for an additional couple of clipart disks as well as an astounding digitized sound demo (38 seconds worth) of guitar solo from Pink Floyd's "The Wall" album. With the gradual conversion to double sided disks you may find that there will not be as many new disks per month, but the volume of programs will not change.

There is nothing major in the way of new utilities except for the release of a new version of Manual Maker. This program is a shareware gem that uses GDOS to print a text file in a 5 1/2 by 8 inch manual format allowing for printing on both sides of the paper. GDOS or G PLUS+ is required as well as GDOS fonts. The program allows for embedded commands in the text file to create text attributes such as italics, bold, underlined, centered, etc. It will appear on an April Utilities disk. Also available will be the March disk offering from the British ST/Amiga Magazine which includes a multi-user game based on the Midi-Maze principal. See you in April.

GAG DISK 229

Digitized Sounds

A collection of classic lines from the movie Spaceballs. Includes player program. DOUBLE SIDED DISK.

PLAYEM.PRG GOODDUMB.SND
IM_RICH.SND SELFDEST.SND
SHWARTZ.SND SHWARTZ2.SND
VRGNALRT.SND

GAG DISK 230

Digitized Sounds

More classic lines from the movie Spaceballs. Includes player program. DOUBLE SIDED DISK.

BEAMME.SND BSTFREND.SND
BIGASS.SND DRUIISH.SND
MONEY.SND SURROUND.SND
TWISTED.SND

GAG DISK 231

Games Vol 31

- BULEDIT.PRG
- BULLET.PRG

An interesting game in which you must guide a speeding train through a labyrinth of tracks avoiding a crash. Created using STOS, a BASIC language dialect for writing arcade games. Also includes an editor program for designing your own track layout. COLOR ONLY

GAG DISK 233

Graphic Utilities

- COLOR512.PRG

- VIEW.512.PRG

Add up to 512 colors to Degas, NEO, or Tiny pictures. Allows 16 colors per scan line. Includes docs and a viewer program.

- FILLS.PI3

A Degas mono screen that contains hundreds of fill patterns that can be extracted and added to your pics in Degas Elite. Includes docs.

- GYRO_7.1.PRG

• GYROSLDE.PRG
Graphic design & simple animation program that generates graphics through math trig functions. Includes dozens of animation files, docs, and a slideshow program.

- MEGABLT.PRG

Hi res paint program that works in all resolutions. Allows a work area up to 2560 by 1920 pixels. Includes docs.

GAG DISK 234

Clipart Vol 13

Mac Nudes

A collection of IMG pics of nudes converted from the Macintosh MAC format. Most pics are R-rated. Includes IMG slideshow. DOUBLE SIDED DISK.

ADVERTIS.IMG ANGELA.IMG

GAG DISK 234 (CONT)

BABERUTH.IMG BANANAS.IMG
BEAUTY.IMG BOMB3HEL.IMG
BONNIE.IMG BROOK.IMG
CHAIRIE.IMG CINDY.IMG
COMBONA2.IMG COMBONAT.IMG
CUTOOTS.IMG DEESFRNT.IMG
DOORWAY.IMG FIRST.IMG
FRAZETTA.IMG GIRLX2.IMG
HISAILOR.IMG HUTTON.IMG
NUDE0643.IMG SUNTAN.IMG

GAG DISK 235

Clipart Vol 14

A collection of IMG pictures covering air-planes, autumn scenes, and comic strip characters. All multiple screens have been separated into individual files with many of the files enhanced for better resolution. Files have been renamed to more descriptive titles. You will find this method saves a great deal of time when importing the file into a DTP program. Includes IMG slideshow program and docs.

- ATOONS
- AIRPLANES
- AUTUMN

GAG DISK 236

Utilities & Apps Vol 20

- DCDESKEY.ACC

A beta version of a desktop accessory from Double Click that allows you to control desktop functions with keystrokes. Includes docs.

- MYSTIC.ACC

Another goodie from Double Click that allows you to format disks while running another program.

- QUIKPRNT.ACC

Produces text only screen dumps for speed. Includes docs.

- SUPERSPL.ACC

Another goodie from Double Click that allows you to format disks while running another program.

- ARCSH198.PRG

The latest version of this indispensable utility for those that ARC or UNARC files. Shareware. Includes docs. This version adds keyboard equivalents for power users.

- DATABASE.PRG

A database program from England that allows up to 500 records with 14 fields per record. Database held in memory for speed. Includes docs. COLOR ONLY.

- MACCEL.PRG

A mouse accelerator from ATARI CORP. Put in auto folder and your mouse will require much less deskpace to move across the screen. Small, takes little memory and it works like a charm. Includes docs.

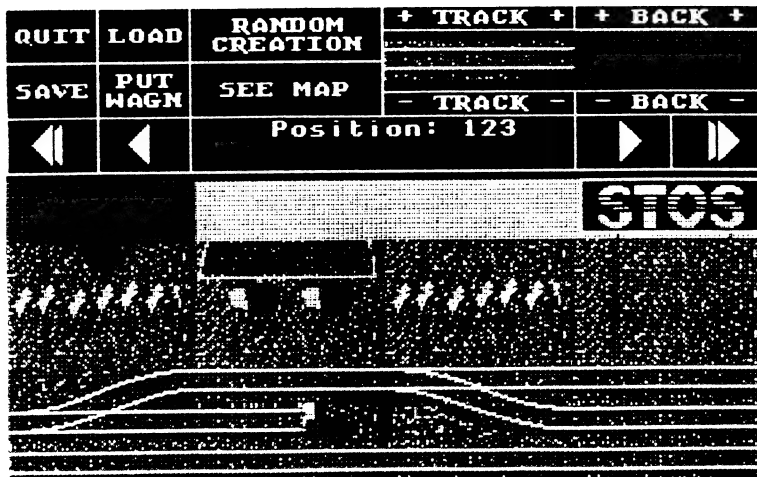
- FONT.TTP

- MONOWARE.PRG

Monochrome emulator with a program that will install a much more readable screen font when in emulated hires mode. Includes docs.

- TAB142.ACC

The Address Book database accessory. Includes docs.



Screen shot from Bullet Train editor program

GAG DISK 232

Games Vol 32

- ORBIT.PRG

An Arkanoid clone written using STOS. Program lets you design your own screen. Games comes with 20 levels to challenge you.

- ZOLTAR.PRG

A Galaxian type game written using STOS. Lets you design your own waves.





Viewpoint

Caution, Read Carefully

by Leo Sell (C.H.A.O.S.)

Caution. That's good advice. Especially these days for Atari owners hungry for news, information, and events. It's become painfully obvious how careful we all must be these days. You know, it's not unusual to see a product announcement in one publication and a denial in another these days. Sometimes it's hard to know who or what to believe.

That's the reason for this article. Read carefully. It's not my intention to point fingers or identify information sources that are either reliable or unreliable. No, I merely want to remind you that it's important for you to note it yourself.

Perhaps you don't realize it, but there is more than one source for Atari information out there - and some of them have interests other than accuracy and information. Don't take every announcement or rumor as the gospel truth. Check it out. See if it is verified in other publications. You know, the power of the press is great, but it is the reader's responsibility to question and check the accuracy of the news and information.

GLAD participates with Z-Net, a national Atari newsletter supplement. As President of one GLAD's participating clubs, it's my responsibility to watch that accuracy, fairness, and a positive tone always be contained therein. If not, the club would have to reconsider its involvement.

I urge you to hold up some similar yardstick to any sources of Atari information you use. Is the source fair? Is it accurate? Is it positive as possible? Does it accept other views as well as its own? You get the drift. See if the source measures up to your expectations as a reader. If it doesn't, then drop it. There's plenty of other places to get information from.

But please be careful. More than one publication, online or printed, has different standards than I care for. One national magazine for instance will not print anything negative about Atari. Now being positive is one thing, but it's important not turn a blind eye to faults either. Other magazines seem to be mostly program listings and not much information.

Online sources are even more volatile. With BBS's being faceless, if not anonymous, you sometimes see incred-

ible statements. Same caution is important on the national services. There are online news publications that are reprinted all over the country; their statements taken as gospel. Anyone out there watching for accuracy?

You know there are a large variety of sources for non-Atari news. Newspapers, radio, television. And all of them kind of balance and check the other. We all know the difference between reading an Associated Press story, and reading something out of the National Enquirer. Sure, the latter is more fun, but is it really accurate? Should you believe whatever they print?

The Atari community is infinitesimal compared to society at large. And there really is very little balance between sources of information. That's why it's important for you the reader to have some measure and to use it.

Read carefully. Have high standards. Choose your sources for Atari news carefully. And enjoy.



Software

All About Shareware

Reprinted and adapted from DataLink, March 1989. Original article from ACAOC, Fall 1988. No author was given credit

Do you know what shareware is? It is a method of distributing software on "a try before you buy" basis. The author works on his product, then usually uploads it to several BBS's or online services. He typically asks that if you use or enjoy his program, you contribute money to encourage him to write additional software for the machine. This has a number of advantages for both the programmer and the end user. It allows the user to really give the program a good workout and see if it functions as claimed. It also allows the user to see if the program is really something that he will use, and not just something that will collect dust on his shelves.

For the programmer, shareware eliminates just about all of his costs of advertising and distribution. In the Atari World, word of mouth (or modem) is very powerful and most of the really good programs are well known. It allows him the luxury of NOT haggling over distribution costs/rights, what type of packaging to use, how the manual should be designed, what color of disks to use, what type of graphics to put on the label, etc., etc. The overall effect is a dramatic reduction in costs to bring a program to the marketplace.

However, he also has no way to enforce his payment. The programmer must rely on the honesty of the people

that acquire his product to pay for the software. In fact, that is the whole idea. Try it, if you like it, pay for it!!!

Most of the popular shareware titles carry a very modest price tag. In fact, the costs are so low that if they were in a store, you'd think the product must be of dubious quality to charge so little! Usually the opposite is true! These are programs of the very highest quality. The authors are generally quite accessible and willing to assist the users. NOTE: I did not say some "person" on the other end of a long distance call. The actual AUTHOR/programmer is readily available, usually via E-MAIL on an online service. If you don't have a modem, but have a question/problem, talk to one of us that does. We will be glad to relay for you. Here are some of the more popular shareware programs (mostly ST) with the requested amounts:

DCOPY - a multi-purpose utility that formats disks, copy/moves files, searches directories, ARCs/UNARCs, converts text files to ASCII, ST Writer and 8-bit formats, strips returns from text files, creates folders and much more! \$5

PICSWICH 0.7 - a picture viewing/converting utility that allows the ST to display pictures of different resolutions from the Mac, Amiga, and the 8-bit Atari. Also takes different Atari ST paint programs (as well as RLE graphics) and converts them into Degas and NeoChrome pictures. \$15

VDOS - a graphic shell desktop replacement that allows you to click on an icon and call a specific application. Makes operating your ST even easier than ever. Contribution brings a 100+ page guide \$27

DESK MANAGER 2.00 - a program that at start-up allows the user to select all of his autoboot and desktop accessories, and change them readily. After running, the program exits. \$15

DC FORMATTER - one of the most popular and reliable formatters around for the ST. This formatter will allow you to get more space than the standard GEM desktop format, over 800K on a double-sided floppy. Not only does it work well, it also formats in MS-DOS, boot, and Magic Sac formats. This program is available both as a stand alone formatter, and as a desk accessory. No specific amount requested.

850 EXPRESS! VERSION 3 - The clear leader in 8-bit telecommunications programs. Express has a well deserved reputation for excellence. It runs fast, and well. The standard for other telecom programs aim at. No specific amount requested.

ARCSHELL - If you use your modem with an ST, you simply MUST have Arcshell. It is clearly the leader in making the arc file compression utility easy and convenient to use. ArcShell has been thru numerous upgrades, up to 1.97 as of this writing. It just keeps getting better and better. \$15

TINY STUFF - a picture file compression routine that converts your Degas and Neo pictures into .TNY format, which takes much less space on the disk. \$15

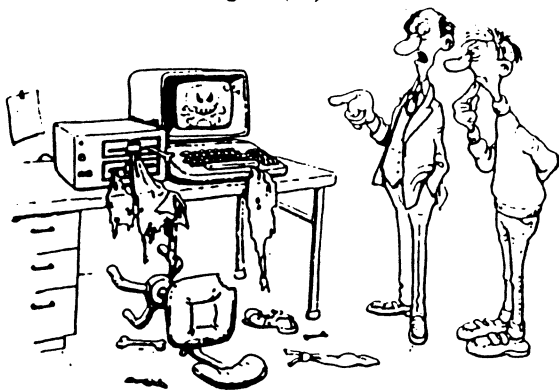
And there are many more. Perhaps Charles F. Johnson says it best in his DOC file for Desk Manager. "Shareware can be a feasible alternative to the normal means of distribution, but it will only work if you do send in your registration fee. I've spent a lot of time working on Desk Manager 2.0, and to be honest I'm looking at it as a sort of experiment to see if there is indeed enough of a shareware market to make this approach worthwhile. So if you'd like to see further updates to Desk Manager 2.0 and other useful shareware programs, your support will make a difference!"

SEND MONEY!

If you do contribute, the authors are usually quick to acknowledge the contribution, and often pass along a little something to say thanks. David Mumper, the author of Tiny Stuff, reportedly has a large number of utilities for the Tiny format that he releases whenever he gets a contribution. So far, he has less than 100 contributors, despite the fact that the program has been downloaded over 6000 times!

Maybe if enough people hear about it, they can actually make a little money on their work! Actually, if you think about it, the very thought of shareware is quite noble. Would you be willing to go to work for no set wage? You wouldn't even know when pay day was, or how much you would get!!! That's what shareware is. "Pay me at least this much, or whatever you think it is worth." I know my boss. No way would I take what he thinks I'm worth! Now, what I'm really worth is another matter!! With shareware, you are in effect the boss. Think about it next time you un-arc a disk with DCOPI of ArcShell, convert a picture with PicSwitch 0.7, or format floppies with the DC Formatter. Have you sent in any contribution at all? If every person that downloaded Tiny Stuff sent David Mumper \$1, he would have made over \$6000 on that program. Not bad. As it sits right now, he has made less than \$900...after two years of distribution!

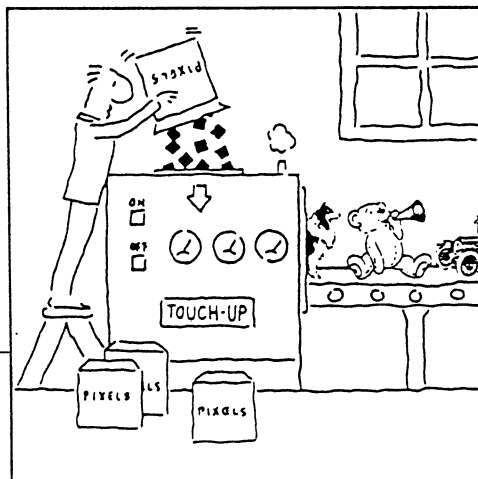
Check your library out...if you have shareware products, resolve to start sending out payments.



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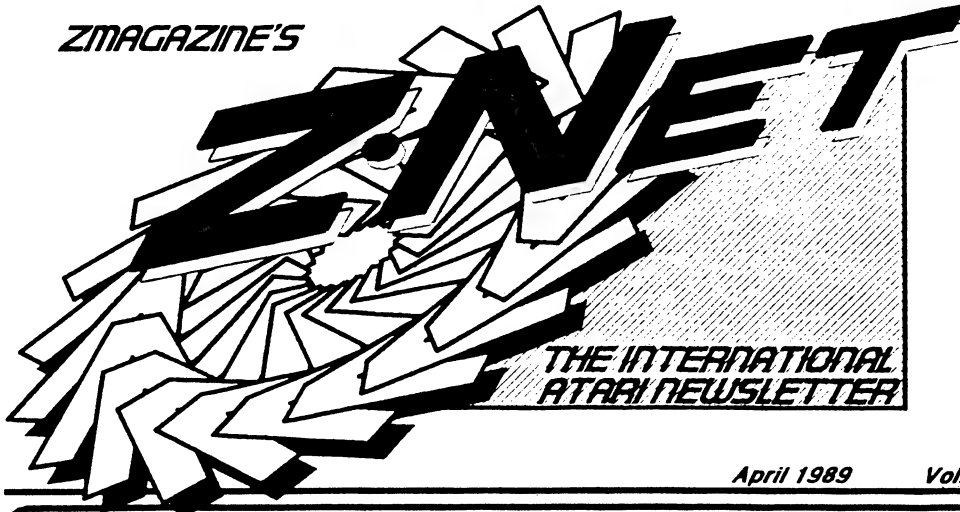


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This Issue:

Z*Net
NewsWire
Beyond GEM
KidAtari Power
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DTP Program
Comparison

April 1989

Vol. 1 No. 2

FEDERATED GROUP NOT TO BE CLOSED BY ATARI

by John Nagy

Contrary to claims in the press that Atari Corp was to begin "closing Federated Stores" in March, officials and managers at several Federated locations and headquarters in southern California told Z*Net that "business as usual" would continue at Federated Group locations. However, a sale or other separation of Federated by Atari is now clearly intended.

Reactions and rumors of "closings" were apparently based on information in a March 8 press release stating the financial position and outlook of Atari Corporation as of December 31, 1988. Among the profit and loss statements, the release also stated that as of year end 1988, Atari began treating its Federated Group, a wholly owned subsidiary, as a "discontinued operation". Atari is reported to be studying viability of sale, spinoff, or leveraged buyout of the subsidiary, which has shown continued losses. The change of status to "discontinued" is a financial maneuver to prevent any future Federated losses from impacting Atari financial statements, fixing the allocations and isolating Federated pending a decision on what to do next. Reserves and recorded writeoffs attributed to Federated are now posted at \$100 million.

It was stressed that the changes were neither caused by nor would be affected as a result of the lawsuit pending between Atari and the former owners of the Federated Group. In that suit, Atari charges that the assets and liabilities of Federated were grossly misrepresented by the sellers, and Atari actually is seeking more money in the suit than it paid for the store chain.

Officials Z*Net talked to called the closing reports "false" and "misleading", and explained how Atari was reorganizing its involvement with Federated. Operation of

the Federated Group chain will not cease as a result. Although a very few of the more than 60 stores may close in the reorganization, any closings will be a result of individual store performance. Meanwhile, several high officials within Atari Corp are said to be considering buying the electronics store chain from Atari.

Managers and staff at several stores told us that they had been assured that most Federated Group stores were not going to be closed or affected by the reorganization or sale. The stores will continue to carry ATARI as their "first line" of computer products, and no change in stock or policy is anticipated.

Atari posted fourth quarter operating earnings of \$15.2 million in 1988, compared to \$31.3 million for the period in 1987. Net income for the fourth quarter of 1988 after extraordinary items and "discontinued operations" were \$9.3 million (\$21.2 million in 1987). 1988 total net sales were \$452.2 million, up from \$362.6 million in 1987. Tangible net worth of Atari is pegged at \$83.2 million. Cash and temporary investment position alone (\$91.9 million) nearly offsets the total outstanding short and long term debts of \$93.5 million.

Dynamic RAM shortages and high prices are blamed for the comparatively poor fourth quarter. However, release claims the shortage "peaked" in that quarter, and implies it is easing now. It continues, "A number of new items designed to complement the existing ST" and MS DOS product lines will be announced this year."

The report concluded with this enlightening message: "If anticipated demand for our products grows and our new products meet with success in the marketplace, 1989 should be a good year."

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If you don't see what you are looking for listed here, it's probably because typing all these numbers wears out one's fingers. Chances are we have it in stock, and if by some chance we don't, we can probably get it for you before you can say "Z*NET is a terrific publication!"

If you don't see it, call anyway! You'll be glad you did. We are Atari people from 'way back' and will do our best to keep you, our customers, satisfied.

Thank you for your business.

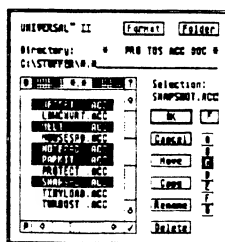
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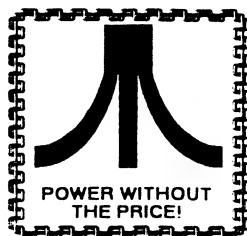
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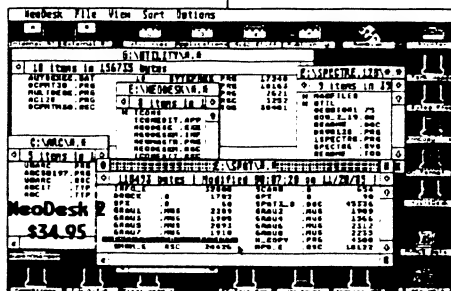
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☞ Last month, in Z*NET NEWSWIRE, we gave you details on Auto Mall Shows. This is a listing of the CONFIRMED dates. March 31, April 1,2 - North Glen Mall, Denver, Colorado; April 7,8,9 - Bon Marche Mall, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Town & Country Mall, Houston, Texas; Viela Italia Mall, Denver, Colorado; Mayfair Mall, San Leandro, Ca; April 14,15,16 - Dutch Square Mall, Columbia, South Carolina;



Greenbrier Mall, Cheesapeake, Virginia; April 28,29,30 - Golf Mill Shopping Center, Niles, Illinois. NOTE: Dealers interested in hosting any of these and future shows are encouraged to call Sig Hartmann at (408) 745-2000 as soon as possible.

☞ CompuServe continues its \$15.00 free online time offer. If you are not a subscriber and would like to get online, send your name and address to Syndicate/Z*Net Publishing, PO Box 74, Middlesex, NJ 08846. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

☞ The first WORLD of ATARI show debuts this month in Anaheim California, at the Disneyland Hotel, April 22-23, 1989. Seminars, Workshops, Super Sales, Atari 8bit, 16bit, XEGS and more. Atari will rent the Grand Ballroom at

the hotel for a free concert. They plan to have four or more performers. Possible acts include, Mick Fleetwood(Fleetwood Mac), Michael Pinder(Moody Blues), the Pointer Sisters, maybe an ex-Beatle, too. Tickets will be available exclusively from vendors on the World Of Atari floor. Stay tuned to ZMAG, STZMAG for the latest details every week.

☞ World of Atari's Rich Tsukiji announced his plans for future shows to a group of Michigan club officers last month while planning his June 24-25 Detroit area show. Annual shows will be held in four or five locations which may include Disneyland, Detroit, and Seattle. As many as five smaller shows each year will be held in other locations such as Salt Lake City and Dayton.

WORLD OF ATARI Disneyland Hotel April 22-23, 1989

Rich would like groups interested in having World of Atari come to their area contact him and request a show. This will avoid future conflicts like that with MACE. That Detroit club voted to schedule their own AtariFest barely more than a month in front of the Dearborn Hyatt Regency World of Atari Show. Contact Rich at (503) 673-2259.

☞ Marty Albert, GENIE 8-Bit SysOp recently left messages on the service detailing his conversation

with Sig Hartmann about lack of support for the 8-bits. Mr. Hartmann responded positively and asked the GENIE crew to post a message in the Bulletin Board area requesting input for what 8-bit developers would want in a Developer's Kit. Interested parties should respond on GENIE, and comments will be forward to Sig Hartmann to see what can be done about it.

☞ Another anti-dumping tariff may be in effect as you read this. We all remember the days of the 256k ram chip for \$2.00 and lived through the unbelievable price hikes that took the cost of this integrated circuit as high as \$18. Sad to say, it appears we will indeed encounter another tariff. The International Trade Commission will be voting on whether or not US disk manufacturer Verbatim was harmed by Japanese dumping of disks. The ITC will be authorized to collect tariffs on all incoming 3 1/2 disks from Japan. These tariffs will be as high as 51% of the total cost of the disk! Japanese disk sales in the US ran about 140 million in 1987, and the tariff would bring in a healthy chunk of change to the ITC. But....the idea of drastic disk price increases will not sit easily with the home consumer.

☞ David Sullivan of Total Control Systems maker of the soon to be released GOE (Graphics Operating Environment)

Cartridge, expects atleast limited compatibility with the similar Diamond Cartridge (Alan Reeve, Reeve-soft). Applications written for either of the Atari 8-bit Desktop systems may be portable if a very few unique functions are avoided (alternate font sizes, etc). If this works out, 8-bit users can look forward twice as many new programs for each system. TCS can be contacted at (619) 270-0111. Reeve-soft can be reached at (301) 863-8369.

☞ Comdex is in Chicago for the first time April 10 thru 13. These shows are for manufactures and developers of business hardware and software. After several disappointing showings at last years Comdexes, This time Atari promises to introduce several new hardware items.

☞ Atari specialty catalog: E. Arthur Brown Company of Minnesota released their spring 89 catalog in March. This sixteen page newspaper is a jackpot of Atari software and accessories. As usual there are special limited deals: GFA ARTIST and the never before available GFA RAY TRACE are each \$29.95 due to Michtron's liquidating their GFA line. Brown got a deal on the Michtron labeled boxes, and can pass the savings to you. This is the type of offer E. Arthur Brown is known for, get their catalog!! 1 (800) 322-4405. ♦



RATTY'S RAP

Mal*Ral - Ralware Softworks



Let's take a quick look at new cartridge games from Atari: "Crime Busters", by James Zalewski, is another boffo light gun game from the man who brought you "Barnyard Blaster". The name may not be familiar, but many of you weathered Atari probably know his work - Jim comes from the company once known as K-Byte (the folks who brought us KRazy everything, most notably KRazy-Shootout). There has been one report that Jim's new game is "less accurate" than "Barnyard Blaster". This is somewhat impossible, since the EXACT same gun read routines are in both games (this comes direct from Jim).

In the tradition of Elliot Ness, you're out to sweep up the streets. There are plenty of bad guys to blast. Select one of 12 trouble zones on your crime map (point and shoot). Sometimes you'll have to drive there. In this scene the bad guys will chase you, and you've got to blast them off the road. What's ODD here is that you cannot shoot the car that's annoying you. You must shoot some arrows at the bottom of the display, which directs gunfire FROM your car, on the road above. This was done to be "different", according to James. He's disappointed with the results here, but these were Atari's specifications. After you have driven to your first destination, so long as you always chose adjacent areas, no more driving scenes will be required.

Once at your destination you will face hoods in one of several different scenes. My favorite is the warf, where bad guys pop up in windows on a boat. Divers will also surface in the water to shoot at you. Shoot first, ask questions later. Occasionally a beautiful blonde will pop up in a window, or a goofy kid holding a lolly pop - not a gun. Or a lovely gal in a bikini will float onto the scene at the warf. Don't shoot the innocent bystanders, it'll cost you valuable bullets and time.

At the end of the game (you die 3 times or complete all 12 areas) you are presented a rating and a score. Nothing special happens when you clean up the whole city, outside of getting the "Crime Buster" rating. It would have been nice to be presented a medal of valor, or something. But, according to James Z., EVERY BYTE was used up in the 64K bank switch cartridge as it was.

This is a superb game that has only one flaw. It DEMANDS more accuracy than the gun can deliver. Sure, I can beat the game, if I sit pretty close to the monitor. It seems that you have to hit the bad guy in the head or chest, or

he doesn't die. By contrast, when I play Nintendo's "Hogan's Alley", I sit clear across the room in my easy chair to play. I don't think it's that the Nintendo's gun is that much more accurate, just that the software is more forgiving. Atari's light gun games have objects that are too small, too many, and require too much accuracy. This makes them more frustrating than they should be.

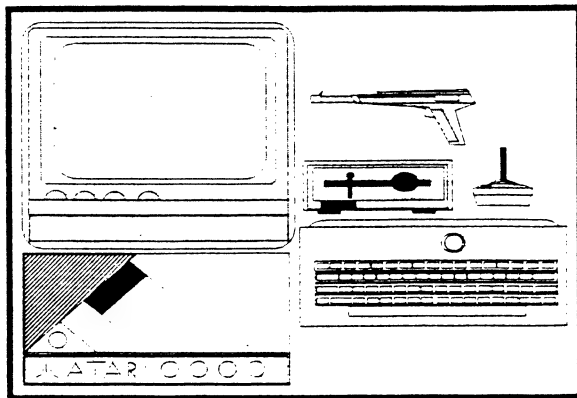
"Dark Chambers" is an exciting graphics adventure, along the lines of Gauntlet from Mindscape. It's less sophisticated in that it only has 26 levels (Gauntlet sports over 200, and separate screen disks of 500 more screens may be used as well!), and you only have two courses of offensive action - shoot, or blast a bomb (if you have one). In Gauntlet you can also cast spells, and a few other things. "Dark Chambers" is visually exquisite, and VERY playable. As a matter of fact, I beat it - got through all 26 levels - in only a couple of days at the "beginner level" of difficulty. Guess what happens after level 26? Level 1 again! This is the game's major flaw. No goal other than more points, and adventure gaming for the sake of adventure. Am I tempted to go back to it at the intermediate level and try to beat it again, and then at the expert? NO! However, it has a nice two "simultaneous" player mode. So, after you tire of it, it's great when you have friends over!

I am worried about a few things, and I'd like to pass my concerns on to you. If you feel the same way, write to Atari about it:

Jerry Pournelle, of Byte magazine, announced the Commodore Amiga as the most improved computer of 1988. The company has brought out several new and very impressive products. The most notable are the PC-AT compatible bridge board (no software emulation - pure PC compatible hardware!) and a 68020 coprocessor board. Many more good things are promised, and things look, in general, very healthy for the company and it's computer line.

So what has Atari done in the last year? Recently they lowered prices. If I recall, just about ALL ties between Atari and store chains such as K-Mart were severed way back when Atari started slashing prices on the 400/800 without refunding the difference to the stores. The chains got burned real bad! When Jack Tramiel took over Atari he announced that BUSINESS IS WAR! Is the war over? Did anyone think their purchase of Federated was a good idea? Is anyone surprised that Atari is NOW trying to "dump" it? I tell you about new game cartridges that my dealer is fortunate enough to get in short order after their release. Then you tell me you cannot find the new games ANYWHERE. Call Atari and ask them where you can get the product. You know what they'll do? They will offer to sell the product direct to you, at full retail PLUS shipping. Do they really think we're that desperate for product? That we're that BRAND LOYAL? Is Atari TRYING to become a mail order only company like Dell Computers or CompuAdd? If they do, I doubt they'll be around much longer.

I hope I'm wrong, and Atari does something REALLY SPECTACULAR. If you care, write to Atari and express your views. If you don't care, then do what you gotta do. Either way, I'll be around supporting the 8bit Atari so long as there are magazines that want my work. As for all you fellow loyal Atarians out there, as Dan Rather would say (or George Michael!), "FAITH"! ♦



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DTP PROGRAM COMPARISON

by G.L. Smith

I operate a commercial photography studio and we use type extensively to create, amongst other things, text graphics which we then photograph to create some varieties of presentation slides. In order to save the expense of outside Typesetting, as well as to improve production time we have been attempting to use the ST for more and more 'Typesetting Chores'. Our biggest problem is that while the printed page may look good to the eye when it is photographed using high-contrast film, and made into 35mm slides, it is then subject to some pretty mammoth enlargements!

Believe me GDOS fonts printed even on a 24 pin printer blown up to 10 or 12 feet are not pretty!. However it seems that we are now as near as we are going to get by using the Atari Laser printer, and using legal sized paper in the 'landscape' orientation, and limiting text output to 7 or 8 lines usually 36 to 72 point. At these sizes we have found GDOS to be useless, and its here that Calamus, and Pagestream have a big advantage. But in order to get to where we are now we have used all of the readily available DTP programs, (and this is where the story really begins) and since we have all of em I thought you may be interested in a very unscientific quantitative comparison of what they can do in a normal page mode.

I designed a sample page which had two headlines in 48 point Times, Dutch, or Tymes (!), the standard serif font. One line in 'normal' weight, the other 'bold'. Then a third line on 'Light' 12 point type, and a fourth of 20 point italic. Then an IMG image which was sized at about 2.5" x 2.5", two 2" x 6" text columns, and finally a block of 48 point Helvetica bold, and a block of 24 point Times bold. Into the two text columns I imported ASCII text in 10 point Times normal, and 12 point Helvetica bold. So the idea was to create a uniform, comparable layout using various typefaces and point sizes, and various text attributes. Because of the limitation of Calamus' typefaces, (only Helvetica & Times) I was unable to add different fonts. GDOS fonts used were Swiss and Dutch and I used the laser set supplied by Atari for Easy Draw, and the self-generated GDOS fonts for Timeworks. For Pagestream I used Helvetica and Tymes as supplied.

My interest was to determine: a) How long it took to create the page. b) How long it took to print it. c) How the results compared.

I should add that while I am fairly proficient with each of these programs Pagestream and Calamus are fairly new to me, and I hate reading manuals. (That is why the above test does not include esoteric features like shadowed multiple boxes or whatever!) In conducting this very unscientific experiment I ran into a few problems:

1) Timeworks does not permit Dutch (or Swiss) bigger than 36 point - so that was the level of the headlines on Timeworks page.

2) I had used the Calamus ASCII file "Manual.Txt" as the import. This is all in German, and since I don't understand that language, it forms a useful body type. But of course German has all manner of funny letters (umlows or whatever).

3) Calamus Had no further problems.

4) Pagestream just missed out the letters - no space -

just gonzo!

5) Timeworks replaced them with a "!"

6) And Easy Draw - ahh... Easy Draw. After waiting nearly ten minutes for Easy Draw to print the page it occurred to me that it was having a problem with the special characters so I aborted, rebooted, and edited out all the non-English characters. Then waited another ten minutes andnothing. To cut a long story short my Easy Draw (ver 2.6) seems to have a defective text import module. It imports text, displays it, allows you to edit it, and saves it, but it won't bloody print it! So for the easy draw sheet I replaced the import section with typed in prose, or as close as I could come!

(Editors Note: Imported text may fill the page. In order for Easy-Draw to print this text the overflow must be deleted first. If you should fail to delete or place any phantom text, it will not print!)

Ahh what price uniformity. Anyway the following table indicated creation time, and printing time on the Mega 4/SLM804 combo I used:

Program	Creation Time	Printing Time
Calamus	8 min 29 secs	0 minutes 53 secs
Timeworks DTP	6 min 02 secs	1 minute 17 secs
Easy Draw*	10 min 48 secs	1 minute 03 secs
Pagestream	6 min 14 secs	3 minutes 43 secs

As to output..well thats very subjective but for what its worth Calamus: No question best of the bunch in every respect. Headlines were clear and jaggy free. Kerning was excellent, the 12 point bold Helvetica was bold and consistent. Really amazing quality.

Pagestream: Very pleasing looking (except when compared head-to-head with Calamus). Helvetica bold was a bit inconsistent in weight, but the 10 point Tymes as fine. The 48 point bold headline was really disappointing however, looked like three superimposed 'normal' letters with three spikes clearly visible on the serif.

Easy Draw : 48 point is not a good idea! Very jaggy. The body type was fine, but the 12 point bold looked funny for no explicable reason! The italics don't look that good either, but that's probably more to do with GDOS than anything else.

Timeworks: Not very good. Headlines while restricted to 36 point still looked jaggy. 10 point body Dutch body type looked thin and weedy, and the 12 point bold looked too blockish.

All handled the IMG import flawlessly. I guess it will be Calamus for us, but wish they had the typefaces of Pagestream (which we will probably use instead of Calamus for page sized ads or whatever because for the fonts-oops excuse me - typefaces, and attributes. Oh, I know Calamus will have Compugraphics fonts soon, and thats great but I love the dozen faces supplied with Pagestream, and the free fonts offered on the Soft Logik RT (386) on Genie. Hope the foregoing is of interest to someone!

One further note: GDOS Fonts used for Easy Draw were those supplied by Atari with the SLM804 - presumably designed for Write etc. Timeworks fonts were only used for Timeworks. I believe the Atari fonts contain International Characters. ♦

THE CLUB ROOM

by John Nagy

This column will be a monthly exploration of ways to make your club more successful and fun for everybody. I hope a lot of different people with their own ideas will share the authorship as we go. If you (whoever you are!) have something to say about how your club did something that others can learn from, PLEASE write it up and send it, via your local editor, to Z*Net!

There may be no more part of running a club that is more time consuming than putting its newsletter together. It is a never ending race. Beg for articles, search for articles, type articles, print, copy, proof, take it to the printer, pick it up from the printer, make labels, sticker them, sort them, bundle them, take them to the post office... and start over. Heaven forbid if you sell ads... that's a whole story in itself!

For groups participating in Z*Net, the load is lessened, since 12 pages and some resulting funds are assured each month. But the load is still sizable, and editors are hard to find. Some ways to make things easier are: exchange a lot of newsletters; keep an account on GEnie and/or CompuServe; band together with another nearby club; motivate local writers.

Exchange newsletters can give your editor lots of ideas for articles, items to reprint, and sometimes cartoons or graphics that can spice up your own newsletter. They can also keep your local writers on top of things. Perhaps the most satisfying thing that exchanges provide is the grin you see when you get to tell a local writer that his item was reprinted in someone ELSE'S newsletter!

The major telecommunication services like CompuServe and GEnie have a LOT of material of interest to users. The particularly nice thing about articles you find online is that they don't have to be typed! Always be sure you follow any limits mentioned about reprinting when "shopping" for material. ZMAGAZINE and ST*ZMAGAZINE, among other online compilations and newsletters, can also provide additional articles of interest that may be good reprint material.

Another way to get a better, bigger newsletter is to "merge" it with other clubs. In some locations, local clubs from different brand computers put out a joint newsletter. While this sometimes results in scattering the interests, it works well for other groups. A better way to pool efforts, is to band together two or more "nearby" Atari groups into a single publication. This way, ALL the information is about the same interest group. While there will be some very local info that won't interest persons in other groups (like who has to renew this month, etc.), most everything else will be worthwhile to all. From experiences I have had shared with me, it is best to have each group have a completely autonomous section, plus a "common" area for general interest items. This way, no club will feel another is telling it what it can or can't include

in its section. Questions of ownership and authority need to be worked out ahead of time as well.

The economies of scale begin to work quite quickly. Instead of three different clubs in different cities each scraping to get 6-12 pages out each month, together, they can more easily do 24 for everybody. Add Z*Net, and it could be 36 pages, with less work than each does now, or 28 pages and MUCH less work.

Of course, the problem then becomes MONEY. Fortunately, scale helps here too. Print costs PER COPY go down as the number of copies rises. Passing 200 copies allows bulk rate postage. Bulk can reduce what might be 36 or 54 cents per piece (at the larger size) down to 16 cents or less, although delivery time typically increases by about a week. Additionally, if the group can qualify for a non-profit bulk permit, expect to cut the costs in half again! Inquire about cooperation with schools or student organizations at colleges, where school mailing privileges may be extended to registered groups. It becomes much easier to sell an ad in a regional newsletter going to 200-400 people than it is to get interested advertisers in one with 70 or fewer copies, plus Z*Net rebate income is also more efficient for groups with higher circulation numbers.

When selling ads, don't limit your thinking to computer places! Pinball arcades, video rentals, even pizza houses all thrive on the same people that read your computer newsletter! Another thing to try is selling an insert- many larger companies have full color flyers that they like to use, and you could include them, stapled into your newsletter, at almost no actual cost to you. They pay you AND give you the sheet... and you have income to make the newsletter better and bigger.

Finally, back to the first thing I mentioned... begging for articles. "Seeing" a story is really an art form. Think of how many times a really GREAT tip gets mentioned at a meeting, or how someone asked how to configure... whatever. This is perhaps the most important parts of a user group interaction, but how often does it get reported? Instead, meeting minutes are shortened to "discussion followed". TAKE NOTES of what the short questions and answers are about. Corner the guy who has the problem, and ask him to get back to you with his results after trying the various suggestions. Many times, they will be happy to write a couple paragraphs for you about their learning experience. Those few lines may be the most important ones in your entire newsletter to some reader, and they portray what really happens at your meetings. Don't let them get away!

If you are reading this in an exchange newsletter and would like more information about Z*Net participation, call us at (201) 968-8148. ♦

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BEYOND GEM!

What form_do Does and Doesn't Do!

by Douglas Hodson



Welcome to the second edition of Beyond GEM! As stated last month, this column is dedicated to a study of some of the most powerful aspects of GEM.

This month let's take a look at the `form_do()` function GEM provides. `Form_do()` is a very convenient function that handles all the users interaction with dialog boxes. It's makes constructing and implementing simple dialog boxes quick and easy. The construction of a dialog box usually follows the generic recipe given below:

- 1) Create (draw) the dialog box using a resource editor.
- 2) While still in the resource editor, label all the objects that need to be manipulated in the dialog box (i.e. edit fields, buttons, so forth).
- 3) When you save your file, the resource editor will also save a standard C header file that contains the indexes to the objects you labeled and also all the trees you created.
- 4) This header file (say `test.h`) is included in you C source code using the compiler directive `#include <test.h>`.

The include file contains a list of `#defines` that "define" the labels you specified in the resource editor for the objects in your dialog box. The labels are defined as equal to the index position of that particular object in a global object array that the resource editor created (more on exactly what this array is, and what it contains in future columns). This global array is contained in the file called "test.rsc".

To get that dialog box displayed "up on the screen" the following source code can be used. I have to assume you've initialized GEM properly and already loaded the resource file. Also note a assumed that you used the label `DIALOG` for the root of the dialog.

```
do_dialog()
{
    OBJECT *dialog;
    int x,y,w,h;
    int exit_button;

    /* find dialogs address */
    rsrc_gaddr(R_TREE,DIALOG,&dialog);

    /* adjust dialogs coordinates */
    form_center(dialog,&x,&y,&w,&h);

    /* reserve screen space, well not really */
    form_dial(FMD_START,0,0,0,x,y,w,h);

    /* draw dialog */
    objc_draw(dialog,0,MAX_DEPTH,x,y,w,h);

    /* handle user interaction */
    exit_button = form_do(dialog,0);

    /* release screen space, well not really */
    form_dial(FMD_FINISH,0,0,0,x,y,w,h);
}
```

Hopefully this sequence of steps looks familiar. Most of the function calls do one little thing or another then move on. But look at `form_do()`. The description is "handle user interaction". Looks like `form_do` does much more than a little thing or two. This is what makes using `form_do` so convenient, one function call to handle ALL your user interaction!

Convenience can also be a double edged sword. Because it handles so much, you have very little control. So much for the really fancy dialog boxes! If you've ever seen Double Clicks formatting software, you no doubt wondered how they make the buttons highlight (appear selected) as the mouse crosses the button's boundary. They are certainly not using `form_do` to handle the interaction.

Notice the `form_dial` calls. One of the misnomers commonly associated with this call is that it appears to buffer screen memory. This is totally incorrect. The GEM buffer is for menus and alert boxes. The GEM buffer is correctly called the menu/alert buffer and is NOT used for dialog boxes.

So what does `form_dial` do? It causes GEM to generate a redraw message (or event) to the program. Naturally, to handle this redraw message your program must be "listening" to messages generated by GEM using either the `evnt_mesag()` or more commonly the `evnt_multi()` functions (these functions deserve columns themselves!).

Next month we'll continue on with discussion of ways to replace the `form_do` function with a custom `form_do` for you! ♦

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KIDTARI POWER IN ILLINOIS SCHOOL

by John Nagy

Dorothy Brumleve is an Illinois ST programmer who has specialized in programs for children. Most are designed as learning/teaching tools, like KIDPUBLISHER, sort of desktop publishing for very small desks. A director at Dorothy's daughter's preschool uses an ST as a center in his classroom, with programs by Dorothy and a few others for the children to use completely independent of adult help. Becky McCabe, who teaches first and second grade at Leal Elementary School, in Urbana Illinois, saw how the ST was being used in the preschool. Though she was a bit computer-phobic, she wanted her kids to be able to use the programs too. So Dorothy put out four of her programs as CAREWARE, and hoped that we would get enough money sent in by users to buy an ST. In the meantime, they borrowed money and bought a used ST. The CAREWARE funds (currently over \$125) are repaying that loan.

Becky started using Kidpublisher with her kids-it took only a few minutes to train each group- and the output from her classroom interested other teachers. They wanted ST's for their classrooms, too. Dorothy wrote to Sam Tramiel last November on behalf of the school, and asked if Atari could help them acquire 9 520ST's. Nothing happened until a call from Atari in March saying that nine 520s with single-sided drives and color monitors were leaving Atari by truck as an outright donation!

The teachers are very excited about it. The principal is offering the STs to the lower grades, and the few Apple II's that were in those classrooms are moving to the upper grades, following the students who had begun their computer experience on them. About half the upper grades will have the Apples, but ALL the lower grades will have ST's! One can hope that the children will learn to appreciate the power of the GEM operation and demand MORE ST's as they progress.

Dorothy will be giving the teachers a workshop on using the ST and providing starter software. As they use the programs, the teachers will tell her what changes they need, or program concepts they'd like to see implemented. The resulting software will make Dorothy Brumleve's KIDPROGRAMS series even better.

If efforts like Dorothy's and ATARI's are repeated in other locations, it "just might" be possible to flush the Apple's out of the schools from the bottom up! ♦

ATARI UPDATE

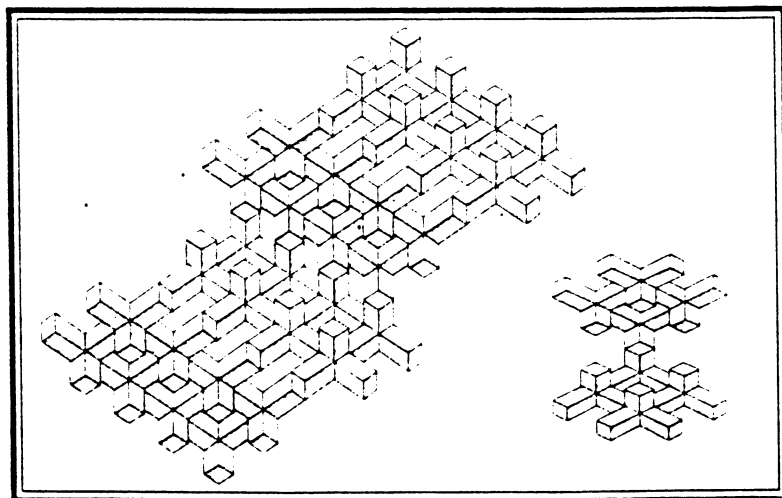
Due to the upcoming shows and commitments, we were given the following information via a telephone interview. Next month we are hopeful of quieter times and Atari's presence.

Vince Giammatteo, new Vice-President and General Manager of the Atari Computer Division, has passed along the following.

- "Atari is excited about this year's Comdex show and will be introducing several NEW hardware items."
- In early May, check your local listings for the television program "Computer Chronicles". Atari will be the subject of the telecast.
- 25 major cities across the nation will soon be viewing 2 Atari TV commercials, one 30 second commercial on the 1040ST and one 60 second commercial on Atari's DTP system, plus newspaper ads.
- Over 200 new dealers have joined Atari, with another 100 projected for this quarter. Interested dealers are encouraged to contact Atari.
- "Dram shortages have eased up which will increase Atari's being able to manufacture more product. Corporate strategy is to aggressively increase the dealer base in the United States. We are currently running a number of promotions which range from the 1040 thru DTP system with Postscript Laser Printer."

In other Atari News:

The SLM804-PCV is finished and should be at Comdex, Atari is officially supporting the World of Atari show in Anaheim California, and will be at Comdex, CEPS (Desktop Publishing Show), and the CES show.



ONLINE REPORT

by Ron Kovacs

There are sister publications to Z*Net, if you are unaware of them here is a capsule of what can be found in recent releases.

ZMAGAZINE - Atari 8-Bit News and Reviews

Recently changed to ATASCII and a 40 column format, a new editor by the name of Harold Brewer, ZMAG brings the latest 8-bit news and topics of interest to you weekly. Recent releases include: OverSeas Visit; Hard Copy 8-Bit Magazines; Micromiser; World of Atari Shows; Hardware Upgrades; Programming Tips; Online Service Sign-up Offers; Surveys; Software Reviews.

ST*ZMAGAZINE - Atari ST/MEGA News and Reviews

Released every Tuesday with the latest Atari News. Recent coverage includes: Michtron Press Releases; ST Help; Public Domain Releases; Z*Net Newswire Reports; Hardware Upgrades on the 1040ST, and IBM Monitors; Spectre 128 Updates; World of Atari; Fleet St Publisher Notes; New Games for the 8-bit and regular original articles from Alice Amore, Sally Nagy, William Whitton, Ron Kovacs, John Nagy, and others.

These online publications are released every Tuesday on CompuServe and GENie. They are also found on over 300 BBS systems around the world. Like...

Blackbird ST	513-253-4898
Stairway To Heaven	216-784-0574
CCBBS (Cumberland County BBS)	609-451-7475
Manitou BBS	219-223-8107
Dateline BBS	718-648-0947
Ratcom BBS	301-437-9813
Shadow Haven Information Service	916-962-2566
Tektron BBS	918-835-5198
Ayer Force	508-772-9009
JACG (Jersey Atari Computer)	201-298-0161
The Pub	716-826-5733
Alternate Universe	407-747-9196
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Panama Atari Users Group BBS	011-507600530
Griffon's Nest BBS	402-466-5339
Kisa Monitron	46-011-494-72997
19th Hole	416-648-8359
Gateway	609-931-3014
Midnight Express BBS	804-379-4156
CHAOS BBS	517-371-1106

As promised last month, Z*Net has opened its own area on the GENie telecommunication network. We are located in the ATARI ST area, on the bulletin board as Category 31. There are separate topic areas for information on ZMAG and ST*ZMAG, an area for discussion about the current issue of Z*Net, and a special topic for editors and publishers of newsletters, particularly those who carry Z*Net. That's a good place to add your comments and questions about the structure and organization of Z*Net.

Also included in the ZMAG/Z*NET category are topics like "List your ZMAG/ST*ZMAG BBS Carrier" and announcements and discussion of World of Atari shows. ZMAG/Z*NET will always have information about the World shows FIRST, because we are the Official Online Voice of ST-World Magazine, sponsors of the shows.

If you are unfamiliar with the GENie system, you should check it out! Charges are \$5 an hour (evenings and weekends), and you will find information, conferences, and LOTS OF DOWNLOADS (including ZMAG and ST*ZMAG every week). Literally hundreds of new programs each month appear on GENie's 8-bit and ST ATARI areas, and Atari itself has people online and available for help and information. To sign up for GENie (and have the normal \$29.95 registration fee waived by ATARI!) call 1-800-638-9636 with your modem at 300 or 1200 baud. As soon as it connects, type HHH and then press return. You should be prompted with "U*=". At this prompt, type: XJM11887.ATARI then hit return. The system will show you a bit of what is available, and register you for an account. Be prepared with either credit card info or bank account checking info. It will take a few days for GENie to verify and activate your account. If you need help by a real live person, try 1-800-638-9636, although they will not have information on the Atari offer.

Once you get online on GENie, type ATARI at the first menu prompt. You will go directly to the Atari area menu. To reach our Z*Net area, choose (1) ATARI ST AREA. You will be asked if you want to join that "Roundtable". Answer Yes, it doesn't cost a thing, and is required for access, sort of an internal membership roll. Select (1) Bulletin Board, then SET 31 to get to our category. Once there, you can see the topics with a TOP, and read messages with REA ALL or REA 4 (for topic 4, etc.). Leave us a message! We'll hope to see you there! ♦

Z*NET welcomes the following Publications and User Groups this month:

ACORN Kernel (Atari Computer Owners of Rochester New York), Rochester, New York.

OrnJuice (Atari Computer Association of Orange County - ACAOC), Fountain Valley, California.

POKEY (Western New York User Group), Buffalo, New York.

Sourcerers Apprentice (Michigan Atari General Information Conference - MAGIC), Warren, Michigan.



Last Hacks

New Faster Disk Drives for the ST

by Bill Pike (Portland Atari Club)

There are those who have thought that the I/O speed of the Atari disk drives was high enough. Well it appears that this isn't so, at least for some hackers. Anyhow it seems that Hardware Modifications Inc. of Silicon Valley have came up with a modification for the Atari disk-drives both modular and installed.

The modification involves a leading edge of technology development, using a totally new type of semiconductor called Thiotimeline. The material was first developed by Dr. Vomisa and is a totally new form of crystal. He found that by varying the impurities and voltages applied he was able to vastly increase the speed of transmission thru the crystal lattice. He had been working on a improved version of the tunnel-diode in which, as you might know, has electrons disappearing on one side of a junction and instantaneously appearing on the other side of the junction. It was very difficult to work this new material. The new semiconductor has finally been formed into an experimental LSI circuit chip that functions as a data separator/buffer for computer interfaces.

Due to the unique properties of Thiotimeline, data transmission has been vastly speeded up. In the new chip the electrons move at faster than light velocities. This results in data being on the output from the chip before it arrives at the input. As you can plainly see this is a big advantage in speed.

The present device, when installed, allows the computer to read data off the disk before the system requests the data. However this causes some severe problems with the operating system as the data is already there before it is required. There are also problems with the computer writing data back to the disk before the computer is finished with its calculations.

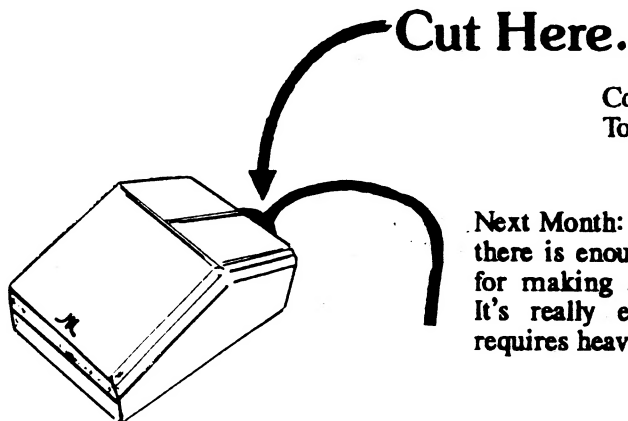
H.M.I is now working furiously to solve these problems. They are developing microprocessor technology using the new material. They hope to arrive at the point of the computer being able to accomplish it calculations before a problem is input.

EDITORS NOTE: If advances in this area continue, it may one day completely revise the software and hardware industry. It will be possible to have dealers simply vend your eventual output of your various programs, saving you the trouble of buying the software and entering your own data. System crashes can simply be bypassed before they occur.

Perhaps the single most devastating effect of the Thiotimeline revolution in the home computer industry may be in Games. Consumers may find it disconcerting to see their own high scores before they play. However, most computerists already know how their entertainment software resolves:

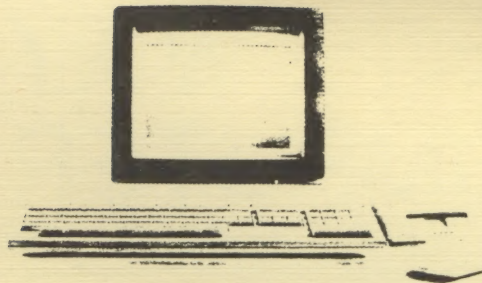
GAME OVER.

How To Make a Wireless Mouse



Complete plans! One easy step!
Tools needed: Wirecutters.

Next Month: How to make a wireless Joystick. If there is enough support, we will also print plans for making a wireless keyboard for the XEGS. It's really easier than we ever guessed (but requires heavier wirecutters).



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